

Educating with Extension



By Brynn Morey, Extension Coordinator, and in collaboration with Alicia Betancourt, Shelly Krueger, and Michelle Leonard-Mularz

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NOVEMBER HAPPENINGS

November 12th
Garden Club of Upper Keys
Fall Festival 9AM-4PM
9404 o/s Hwy. Tavernier

November 12th 10AM-4PM
MOTE Marine Lab Oceanfest
87000 o/s Hwy. Islamorada



November 18th & 19th
Key West Garden Club Plant
Sale and Artist Market

November 24th & 25th
County Offices Closed



November 25th 9AM-2PM
Marathon Garden Club
Holiday Bazaar MM50 Gulfside



November 26th 9AM-3PM
Island Art Festival
31020 o/s Hwy. Big Pine Key



(photo credit NOAA Fisheries)

Queen Conch

By Shelly Krueger,
Sea Grant Agent

Queen Conch (current scientific name *Alger gigas*, formerly *Strombus gigas*) is such an iconic animal in the Florida Keys that local born residents are called “conchs,” especially those living near Key West, Florida. Most locals have their own recipes for conch salad and conch fritters, and on New Year’s Eve, a famous local establishment drops a giant lighted conch during the end-of-year countdown on Duval Street.

Queen Conchs are one of the largest gastropod mollusks that live in warm tropical waters throughout South Florida to Bermuda, in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean -- growing up to 12 inches long and a weight of 5 pounds. These giant sea snails can live for more than 30 years, and since they live in shallow waters and are very slow moving (like all snails!) they are easily captured for food and seashell souvenirs. The Queen Conch fishery has been overharvested in many areas throughout their range. In Florida, the Queen Conch commercial fishery has been closed since 1975 and the recreational harvest has been closed since 1985 in state waters (1986 in federal waters). Yet despite 30 to 40 years of no legal harvest in the United States, Queen Conch populations continue to remain very low. With the proper fishing licenses, Queen Conch still has a legal



Photo Above: Bahamian Conch Salad

commercial and recreational harvest in the Bahamas, St. Croix, and Puerto Rico. Queen conch is available for purchase at local grocery stores and restaurants. Honduras is considered to have the most sustainable conch fishery in the Caribbean.

Plant Clinics

Every Saturday

Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Grimal Grove

258 Cunningham Lane
Big Pine Key

Wednesday, November 2nd

Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Murray Nelson Govt.
Center

102050 O/S Hwy. #244
Key Largo

Plant Clinic

Canceled until December

Key West Garden Club
1100 Atlantic Blvd.
Key West

Wednesday, November 16th

Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to Noon

Garden Club of Upper Keys
94040 O/S Hwy.
Tavernier

Saturday, November 19th

Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to Noon

KW Botanical Garden Nursery

5210 College Rd.
Stock Island

Saturday, November 19th

Plant Clinic

9 a.m. to Noon

Marathon Home Depot
4555 O/S Hwy,
Marathon

Thursday, November 24th

Plant Clinic

Canceled for Holiday

Island Home Nursery
88720 O/S Hwy,
Islamorada

Sea Grant News



Shelly Krueger
UF/IFAS Florida Sea Grant Agent

Shelly recently accomplished the following activities:



- Shelly is the Florida Coral Disease Outbreak Response Communication Team co-lead and our group of state and federal government agency staff and nonprofit coral reef conservation staff meet bimonthly to coordinate stony coral tissue loss disease public communications and coral reef educational content. As part of our ongoing strategy to improve science communication with the public, we have created a series of workshops. This month, we hosted Dr. Alyssa Gehman, who spoke about the sea star wasting disease that has devastated the west coast of North America and Mexico since 2015; there are many parallels between the sea star disease and stony coral tissue loss disease. Dr. Sadie Hundemer, UF assistant professor in agricultural education, natural resources communication spoke about mental models and how to reach diverse audiences.
- Shelly is the co-leader for the Florida Sea Grant Shorelines, Estuaries, and Aquatic Systems work action group (SEAS WAG). During 2022 strategic planning, we determined there was a need for a state-wide Restoration Aquaculture workshop and received a grant from NOAA to host a 2-day workshop at Tampa Bay Watch. We had 48 attendees from state, federal, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the aquaculture industry (oyster, clam, algae, sponge, and mussel farmers) from around Florida. The objectives were to gather leading stakeholders to discuss the current state of the science and future needs related to nutrient credits, permitting, policy, and how restoration aquaculture would be used by farmers to create and manage carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus credits to mitigate poor water quality in nearshore waters. The written report will help to lead the policy and regulatory framework in the future.



- Shelly spoke on US1 Radio Morning Magazine about stone crab season, which started on October 15. Since January 2022, the FWC has tagged over 1,500 stone crabs in Marathon and Key West. FWC is looking for recreational and commercial stone crabbers to report tagged stone crabs. The tag is bright chartreuse and has a 4-digit code. Unlike spiny lobsters, very little is known about the movements of stone crabs. The tag will stay on indefinitely, even after the stone crab molts. We potentially could be finding tagged crabs for years - so anytime you see one, please report the 4-digit number to FWC. You can still harvest the claws, but do not remove the tag! Write down the 4-digit tag number or take a photo and call the FWC Tag Return Hotline: (786)-492-0137 or email tagreturn@myfwc.com. You can always call or email the Monroe County Extension and we can help get the info to the FWC.



The Environmental Horticulture Program and Master Gardener Volunteers remain

CALL OUR OFFICE:
(305)292-4501

We have many different ways we can assist!

EMAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO:
mastergardener@monroecounty-fl.gov

Please include a detailed description of the problem and photos if available

VISIT OUR OFFICE:

Email Monroe@ifas.ufl.edu or
Call (305)292-4501 to schedule an appointment

FACEBOOK PAGE:

Visit our Facebook page for updates, requests, information and so much more!

<https://www.facebook.com/MonroeCountyExtension>

Horticulture News



Michelle Leonard-Mularz
UF/IFAS Environmental Horticulture Agent

- The Environmental horticulture program continues to work with residents on post-storm landscape recovery questions. We helped 60 residents through our plant clinics, site visits, and virtual helpdesk in October.
- Come out this Sunday November 13th to the J. Gilbert Reese Park in Islamorada from 11am to 1pm to learn about butterfly gardening and tour the butterfly demonstration garden. To register for this event call (305)292-4501 or follow the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/424094326547>



Photo Above: Monroe County Master Gardeners lead participants on a tour of the native wildflower demonstration garden located at the historic Gato building in Key West

- Master Gardener Volunteers led a group of residents on a tour of the native wildflower demonstration garden in Marathon at Crane Point Hammock. The garden was developed in collaboration with Crane Point to highlight native plants that attract pollinators and provide food for wildlife. The garden is planted along the Florida Keys Sculpture Trail. This is one of four demonstration gardens in the Florida Keys. There were 25 participants.



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Extension Director's News

Alicia Betancourt
UF/IFAS Family and Community Development Agent and
Monroe County Extension Director

Alicia recently accomplished the following activities:

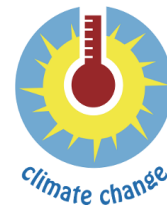
- Alicia participated in the Southeast Florida Clean Cities Stakeholder Committee to discuss emerging legislation, grant funding, and new technology for green transportation.



- Alicia presented the CIVIC program at the World Community Development Conference. Community-facilitated forums that included deliberative discussions are one way the CIVIC program actively encourages participation from underrepresented community members. Alicia attended other presentations to learn about community development programs worldwide, including micro-loans for women entrepreneurs in India and a multi-generational community symphony in Los Angeles.

- Alicia held a program and overall advisory meeting to highlight annual accomplishments and discuss next year's efforts. The committee and staff conducted an annual civil rights training.

- Alicia developed program priorities with cohorts in the Climate Change Work Action Group. The group identified several projects to move forward in 2023.



Continued from page 1



Photo Above: FWC officer displays confiscated illegally harvested Queen Conch

In September 2022, NOAA Fisheries released a notice to list the Queen Conch under the Endangered Species Act. NOAA Fisheries is looking for public comment on the Federal Register through November 7, 2022.

Link: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/09/08/2022-19109/endangered-and-threatened-wildlife-and-plants-proposed-rule-to-list-the-queen-conch-as-threatened>.

Endangered Species Act Definitions

Endangered - any species which is in **danger of extinction** throughout all or a significant portion of its range

Threatened - any species which is **likely to become an endangered species** within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range (South Florida, Bermuda, Caribbean)

National Fisherman's 2022 Highliners

Since 1975 the editors of National Fisherman have annually honored leaders in the U.S. commercial fishing community. The NF Highliners are, as the name implies, the best of the industry – not only at catching fish, but giving back far more to the community, America's rich marine resources, and working to ensure their future.



Chris Brown
Point Judith, RI



Mimi Stafford
Key West, Fla



Terry Alexander
Harpwell, ME



Jerry Sansom
Cocoa, Fla

Mimi Stafford has been on the Monroe County Extension marine advisory board since 1991. She is a commercial spiny lobster and stone crab fisherwoman. Her experience with sponge identification has been integral to Monroe County Sea Grant Agent, Shelly Krueger's programming and we congratulate her on this prestigious award.

Follow the link below for the full article:

https://www.nationalfisherman.com/national-fisherman-s-2022-highliners/?utm_source=marketo&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newletter&utm_content=newletter&mkt_tok=NzU2LUZXSioWnjEAAAGHlsLQ0A0uJoRvoKNsCyoZlexfU_ozLXzL2Si5v5IsKWYdhygc3PY0p8Gd_DdWj_Emwg7Ui3jgzCJBq6MVDz7dFS0VyaFc3xKKkIFgyw9yG7H7MA

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Newsletter Editor: Brynn Morey, Extension Coordinator

This newsletter can be accessed online at:

<http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu/newsletter.shtml>

We're on the Web at: <http://monroe.ifas.ufl.edu>



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<https://ics.ifas.ufl.edu/ufifas-diversity-and-legaleo-statements/>



THE ISLAMORADA FOUNDATION

UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Butterfly Basics & Gardening Tours

Multiple Locations!

Learn how to create a butterfly garden in your own yard and what plants are guaranteed to keep them coming back.

To register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/ufifas-extension-monroe-county-31022637923>

Sunday, November 6th
10AM-12PM

Butterfly Basics & Gardening Tour, Key West
Historic Gato Building, 1100 Simonton St.

Sunday, November 13th
11AM-1PM

Butterfly Basics & Gardening Tour, Islamorada
J. Gilbert Reese Park, 81031 Old Hwy.

These events are free to the public and is sponsored by The Islamorada Foundation

For more information or to register for this event
please call (305) 292-4501

UF/IFAS/MCES QUARTERLY CONTACTS

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Totals
Phone calls	41	60	64	165
Office visitors	71	66	60	197
Email Consultations	122	131	126	379
Learning events	18	26	22	66
Participants	222	319	368	909
Media submissions	7	8	6	21
Publications distributed	234	284	200	718
TOTAL contacts	715	894	846	2455

Zero Interest Emergency Bridge Loans to Assist Small Businesses After Hurricane Ian

Designated Counties:

Brevard, Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Flagler, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Hillsborough, Lake, Lee, Manatee, Monroe, Orange, Osceola, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, and Volusia

**As of October 7, 2022*

Amount:

Up to \$50,000. Only one loan per applicant.

Terms:

Zero-interest for one year.

Eligibility:

Loans will only be made to an individual or individuals who own at least 51 percent of an eligible business located in an impacted county established prior to September 24, 2022, have a credit score of 600 or above, and demonstrate economic injury or physical damage.

For more information go to www.FloridaJobs.org/EBL